WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

A data transfer method performed at a proxy server, the method comprising: intercepting a data request from a client computer that is directed to a target server; encrypting profile information;

augmenting the data request by adding the encrypted profile information to the data request; and

sending the augmented data request to the target server.

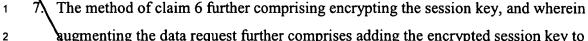
- 1 2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
- 2 receiving a reference token from the target server;
- receiving a second data request from the client computer that is directed to the target
- 4 server;
- augmenting the second data request by adding the reference token to the second data
- 6 request; and
- sending the augmented second data request to the target server.
- 3. The method of claim 2 wherein the reference token comprises a reference to the profile information sent to the target server.

4. The method of claim 1 further comprising retrieving the profile information from a

- 2 database based on an identity of a user.
- 5. The method of claim 4 further comprising using the Internet Engineering Task Force
- 2 IDENT protocol to determine the identity of the user.
- 6. The method of claim 1 wherein encrypting profile information comprises determining a
- 2 session key and using the session key as an encryption key.

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augmenting the data request further comprises adding the encrypted session key to the

data request. 3

> The method of claim 7 wherein using the session key to encrypt the profile information comprises using the session key as a symmetric encryption algorithm encryption key, and wherein encrypting the session key comprises encrypting using a public key encryption algorithm and a public key associated with the target server.

9. The method of claim 8 further comprising obtaining the public key from the target server. 1

10. The method of claim 9 wherein obtaining the public key from the target server comprises 1

sending a request to the target server to retrieve the public key. 2

11. The method of claim 1 wherein the data request comprises a hypertext transfer protocol 1

(HTTP) request comprising a HTTP field, the target server comprises a HTTP server, and

the client computer comprises a web browser application.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein the profile information comprises information associated

with the client computer.

13. A data transfer method performed at an information server, the method comprising:

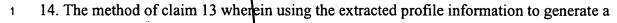
receiving a data request from 4 proxy server;

extracting profile information added to the data request by the proxy server; 3

using the extracted profile information to generate a response; and

sending the response to the proxy server.

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response comprises providing the extracted profile information to a web application and

generating the response by processing the web application.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein providing the extracted profile information comprises

setting HTTP environment variables at a web server and wherein the web application

3 comprises a common gateway interface script.

1 16. The method of claim 13 further comprising storing the extracted profile information at

the information server and associating a reference token with the stored profile

information, and wherein the response further comprises the reference token.

1 17. The method of claim 16 further comprising:

receiving from the proxy server a second data request comprising the reference token;

extracting the reference token from the second data request;

accessing the stored profile information based on the reference token; and

using the stored profile information to generate a response to the second data request.

18. The method of claim 1 wherein extracting the profile information comprises decrypting

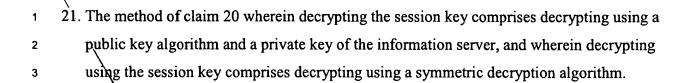
the profile information.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein the data request further comprises a session key added

to the data request by the proxy server and wherein decrypting the profile information

comprises using the session key to decrypt the profile information.

20. The method of claim 19 further comprising decrypting the session key.



- 22. A computer program residing on a computer-readable medium, comprising instructions for causing a computer to:
 - intercept a data request from a client computer that is directed to a target server; encrypt profile information;
- augment the data request by adding the encrypted profile information to the data request;
 and
- send the augmented data request to the target server.
- 1 23. The program residing on the computer-readable medium of claim 22 further comprising
- 2 instructions for causing a computer to:
- receive a reference token from the target server;
- receive a second data request from the client computer that is directed to the target server;
- augment the second data request by adding the reference token to the second data request;
- 6 and
- send the augmented second data request to the target server.
- 24. The program residing on the computer-readable medium of claim 22 wherein:
- the instructions for causing the computer to encrypt profile information comprise
- instructions to encrypt the profile information using a session key and a symmetric
- 4 encryption algorithm;
- the program further comprises instructions to encrypt the session key using a public key
- encryption algorithm; and
- the instructions to augment the data request further comprise instructions to add the
- 8 encrypted session key to the data request.



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1 2 A computer program residing on a computer-readable medium, comprising instructions

2 for causing a computer to:

receive a data request comprising encrypted profile information added to the data request

by\a proxy server;

extract the profile information added by the proxy server;

use the extracted profile information to generate a response; and

send the response to the proxy server.

26. The program residing on the computer-readable medium of claim 25 further comprising

2 instructions for causing a computer to:

store the extracted profile information;

associate a reference token with the stored profile information;

include the reference token in the response to the proxy server;

receive from the proxy server a second data request comprising the reference token;

extract the reference token;

access the stored profile information based on the presence of the reference token in the

second data request; and

use the accessed profile information to generate a response to the second data request.

27. The program residing on the computer-readable medium of claim 25 wherein:

the data request further comprises encrypted session key information;

the program further comprises instructions for causing the computer to decrypt the

session key information; and

the instructions to extract the profile information comprises instructions for causing the

computer to decrypt the profile information using the decrypted session key.

1 28. A proxy server comprising:

a database comprising records storing user profile information;

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a network interface operatively coupled to a network to exchange data with a client computer and with a target server; and

a processor operatively coupled to the network interface, the database, and a memory comprising executable instructions for causing the processor to intercept a data request that is directed to a target server, retrieve a record from the database, encrypt profile information in the record, augment the data request by adding the encrypted profile information, and send the augmented data request to the target server

29. The proxy server of claim 28 wherein the memory further comprises instructions for causing the processor to receive a reference token from the target server, receive a second data request from the client computer that is directed to the target server, augment the second data request by adding the reference token to the second data request, and send the augmented second data request to the target server.

30. The proxy server of claim 28 wherein:

the instructions for causing the computer to encrypt the profile information comprise instructions to encrypt the profile information using a session key and a symmetric encryption algorithm;

the memory further comprises instructions to encrypt the session key using a public key encryption algorithm; and

the instructions to augment the data request further comprise instructions to add the encrypted session key to the data request.

31. An information server comprising:

a network interface operatively coupling the information server to a proxy server; and a processor operatively coupled to the network interface and to a memory comprising executable instructions for causing the processor to receive a data request from the proxy server, decrypt user profile information added to the data request by the target server; and use the decrypted user profile information to generate a response to the data request.

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32. The server of claim 31 wherein the memory further comprise instructions to decrypt an encrypted session key added to the data request by the proxy server, and the instructions to decrypt user profile information further comprise instructions to decrypt the user profile information using the decrypted session key.

